

**Human beings have often had a very confusing relationship with their bodies...  
Sometimes we honor and respect them...  
Sometimes we treat them cruelly and disrespectfully...  
Sometimes we worship them...  
and sometimes we crucify them..**

**Our bodies are sometimes the source of our glory and, sadly,  
sometimes the source of our shame.**

**Different times and different cultures have had different standards  
as to what makes a body beautiful and worthy  
and what makes it only worthy of disdain...**

**It's a funny thing this body...we can't be human without it!**

**We can't leave it behind, and as much as we try to change it with diet, exercise or surgery  
as much as we try to hide it with makeup and clothing and different hairstyles,  
we really have to live with what we have been born with...like it or not...**

**So it would seem to be somewhat prudent to come to terms with our bodies,  
to acknowledge the limitations, their gift and their wisdom...  
and that is one of threads of our reading today...**

**The woman in today's story has been bleeding for 12 years.**

**In those ancient times, anytime a woman bled,  
she would be punished if she had contact with another person  
whether she did it on purpose or not....**

**Because of her bleeding, she was considered unclean and even with the slightest touch  
she would have made the other person unclean as well....**

So, just a short aside: being unclean isn't the same as being sinful, but for the ancient Jews the issue of purity and cleanliness vs. of impurity and contamination was THE ultimate issue.

All of their 600+ laws were aimed at keeping the Israelites, both men and women, pure and clean and thus separate and holy from all of the unclean people, places and things around them

So, back to today's reading...since this woman had been bleeding for 12 long years everyone surely would have known about it....

Perhaps she was already shut out from of her family and her community. children probably would have been taught to stay as far away as possible from her... She would have been known as "that" woman...

So, perhaps it was the desperation of her situation that gave her the courage to risk entering the crowd and touch the hem of his coat....

Strikingly though, the moment she does...Mark says:

**"IMMEDIATELY, she felt it in her body that she was healed"**

I wonder if she thought she had gone out of her mind?

Did she think that she had died or that she was dreaming?

Did she doubt what her body knew?

Interestingly, even Jesus knew IMMEDIATELY in his body that power had gone out from him.

Even though HE did not know where or to whom or for what reason...

he could feel the difference in his body...

Isn't that remarkable?!

She knows what has happened, but he doesn't...

**Today, we are being offered an unique glimpse**

**of the mysterious Holy, Divine Power and Energy and Grace  
which was at work in and through Jesus....**

**We are given a clear example of how valuable our bodies can be  
in experiencing the presence of God....**

**Often times in ages past, and still yet today,  
the body was considered dirty and unimportant...**

**Often times we were more concerned about our afterlife than our present life...**

**Often times we were taught that our bodies and our bodily needs and desires were  
sinful and needed to be tamed and brought under control...**

**But Jesus didn't think that way at all!**

**Bodily needs were important to him....**

**Are you hungry? Here's something to eat...**

**Are you cold? Here's an extra coat ...**

**Are you sick or in pain? Come here, my Father can heal you.....**

**And he instructed his disciples to do the same....**

**This life, this body mattered to Jesus...**

**we have plenty of Gospel evidence for that...**

**Both Jesus and the woman took clues from their bodies  
that Power and Grace was present...**

**they both experienced the flow of Power in their bodies first,  
and then they acknowledged it...**

**It took some time and explanation before they could both  
intellectually understand what happened...**

**and when the story was made known,**

**when the woman acknowledged her plight and her actions...**

**Jesus calls her daughter and she was once again  
reunited into her community and her family...**

**Her healing had come full circle...**

**We hear a lot these days about body/mind healing...**

**Physicians, scientists even theologians are beginning to be much more aware  
of the wholeness of the human person....**

**Researches are telling us that our minds are more than the our brains...**

**that the mind is in our entire body...**

**Physicians are more and more aware of how our attitudes and beliefs  
affect our physical health and real dis-ease, our actual physical illnesses.**

**Counselors, both spiritual and emotional are telling us “ the issues are in the tissues.”**

**Our spiritual journey needs to include proper care, respect and love for our physical self.**

**Proper nutrition, sleep, rest, work and play all ought to part of our spiritual journey...**

**Taking a nap, if you are sleep deprived, is a spiritual act!**

**Eating wholesome, clean food can be a spiritual ritual!**

**Breathing with awareness and caring for our bodies with kindness,**

**gentleness and respect, are spiritual practices that honor the goodness of Creation  
and the magnificence of the Creator!**

**We would be well advised to do so!**

**We would be well advised to become more aware of our bodily selves**

**to pay attention to what our bodies are trying to teach us, ...**

**whether we are sick, tired or hurt...or whether we feel healthy and strong...**

**Our bodies can alert us to issues, struggles and concerns that could be**

**separating us from our families and from our communities and even from our best selves,**

**We would be well advised to treat our bodies with respect and kindness...**

**for indeed our body is the residence of the Holy...  
and for this we can certainly whisper “Thank you!” Amen...**